



**DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
CITIZEN'S BUDGET ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
2009/2010**

**Process:**

The committee has met with the District Attorney and his budget staff on two occasions during this budget process starting in November of 2008. The CBAC discussed general fund revenue outlook, constraint target and preparations for submitting the 2009/2010 budget documents. In addition, the CBAC discussed the potential countywide impact of a significant general fund revenue shortfall and generally how the District Attorney's Office will approach submitting their program offers.

In January 2009 the CBAC and District Attorney Michael Schrunk reviewed a draft of the program offers that would be submitted by the District Attorney's Office, the reductions to service proposed as a result of the cuts, and began to formulate its recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners.

In March the CBAC met and discussed recent revenue projections, developments on the State budget shortfall and identified areas of concern they wanted to address in their report.

**Major Changes:**

As requested by the County's budget office, the District Attorney's Office has submitted budget Program Offers that reflect a 12% general fund reduction in the overall operation. With 84% of the budget attributed to personnel costs the vast majority of the \$2.5 million dollar cut will come from position cuts.

In addition to general fund reductions the DA Office will also suffer the loss of 4.5 grant funded Deputy DA positions next year unless new grant funding is acquired. This alone would be a significant cut, but taken with the general fund reductions proposed the office will lose 24.3 FTE next fiscal year. Of the 24.3 positions reduced from the FY2008/2009 adopted budget, 18.3 are Deputy District Attorney positions.

The District Attorney has taken a Streams of Offenders approach to applying his reductions with the more serious felony crime units being impacted the least and the quality of life misdemeanor crimes taking larger cuts. Notably the Drug unit and Neighborhood DA units are taking substantial cuts losing 4 Deputy District Attorneys and 3.8 Deputy District Attorneys respectfully. Significant cuts are also being made to

the Domestic Violence unit which is losing 2 Deputy District Attorneys and the Child Abuse or MDT unit which is losing 1 Deputy District Attorney which represents 25% that units prosecutors.

### **Recommendations/Concerns:**

The District Attorney's Office is a lean organization that continues to keep citizens safe by holding those who commit crimes in Multnomah County responsible for their actions. The CBAC is mindful of the incredibly difficult budget choices facing the Chair as his fellow Commissioners. The committee also knows that it would remiss if it does not point out its concern about how deeply the District Attorney's Office has been asked to reduce its resources. The cuts presented in the District Attorney's Office Program Offers would reduce the number of Deputy District Attorney's from 84.8 FTE in FY2009 to 66.5 FTE in FY2010. This equates to a 21.5% reduce in just one year. This is without question a cause of great concern for the committee as we believe it should be a cause of great concern for every citizen in Multnomah County.

The CBAC believes that the District Attorney has taken a very thoughtful approach to these budget reductions. He has long said that his office will always address the most serious crimes and offenders and the budget proposal reflects this philosophy. The proposed budget will take away some resources in these areas that will have effect of lengthening case processing time and limiting the offices ability to engage in targeted efforts and task forces such as the East County Major Crimes Team, Sexual Assault Response Team and Gang Enforcement Team to name a few. We believe that reductions taken in the Serious Person Crime Unit D, Unit C/Gangs and Domestic Violence should be restored.

The CBAC understands that quality of life crime is considered to be lower on the continuum of crime in term of seriousness. These crimes however impact the livability and business atmosphere in our communities. The offenders committing these crimes not only impact the lives of their victims, but it most cases also negatively impact the lives of their own families. Without an adequate or appropriate consequence for committing a quality of life crime it becomes more difficult to break the cycle of crime that can spiral into more serious crimes over time. The CBAC believes that reduction in the Neighborhood DA Program and Drug Unit are too deep and some resources should be returned to the District Attorney.

### **Emerging Issues:**

The overriding issue is and will continue to be the sagging economy and its impact on resources that would otherwise be available to Public Safety, Health and Human Services and other valuable programs and services the County provides. Just as private citizens

understand the need to tighten their belts and take of the basics when financial circumstances dictate, so must the state and local governments. A Public Safety system that lacks sufficient resources across the spectrum may be in balance but could also be broken. The citizens deserve a functionally sound and balanced Public Safety System.

District Attorney CBAC members:

Bob Pung- Chair	Mike Greenlick	Dave Simpson
Dick Wegner	Irwin Mandel	Earl Sykes